

Minutes of a Meeting of the Concordia Council on Student Life
Held on
November 27, 1998 AD 131 Loyola Campus

Present: Dr. D. Boisvert, Chair, Ms J. Hackett, Secretary, Ms C. Boujaklian, Mr. M. Bujold, Mr. R. Côté, Mr. W. Curran, Ms J. Deri, Ms A. Ghadban, Dr. S.M. Graub, Mr. D. Hinton, Ms A. Kerby, Ms L. Lipscombe, Mr. M. Logan, Ms T. Ryan, Ms A. Siano, Ms L. Toscano

Absent with Regrets: Mr. R. Boncore, Dr. F. Shaver, Mr. J. Johnson, Mr. H. Zarins, Mr. R. Green, Mr. R. MacIver, Mr. C. Dennis

Delegates: Ms D. Gleason represented Ms K. Hedrich, Ms C. Hedrich replaced Ms . A. Vroom

Guests: Mr. C. Emond, Ms J. Chegrinec, Mr. C. Scott, Ms S. Miller

1. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Dr. Boisvert informed Council that as the presentation by Mr. Curran would be in the form of a visit to the Vanier Library, item 5.1 would occur at the end of the meeting. A motion to approve the agenda as modified was moved by Ms Ryan and seconded by Mr. Hinton.

The motion was carried

2. REMARKS FROM THE CHAIR

Dr. Boisvert took the opportunity to applaud the stellar performance of the Concordia Stingers Football Team. On Saturday, November 28th in Toronto, the Stingers will play the Saskatchewan Huskies for the Vanier Cup. A motion to offer congratulations on behalf of CCSL was made by Ms Kerby and seconded by Mr. Côté.

The motion was carried

Dr. Boisvert said that the CCSL mandate and membership as revised by Council had been approved by the Board of Governors. A second faculty member to sit on CCSL, as per the membership revisions, will be solicited.

The Health Services Selection Committee will have their preliminary meeting on December 1st. A Director of Health Services should be appointed by June 1, 1999. The Selection Committee for the Student Affairs Coordinator has met and interviews have been scheduled. Dr. Boisvert hopes to have the Coordinator in place by January 1, 1999.

Dr. Boisvert announced that a *Holiday Luncheon* for student services staff and CCSL members will take place on Friday, December 18th after the CCSL meeting. Invitations will go out the first week of December. A warm invitation is extended to all.

3. APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF OCTOBER 23, 1998

A motion to approve the minutes was made by Ms Kerby, seconded by Ms Siano.

The motion was carried

4. BUSINESS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES

4.1 Vice Rector's Report on the Hall Building Protest Incident

Mr. Emond spoke briefly about his role in the process that led to his report. An investigation was carried out including interviews with the witnesses. In order to review two important perspectives on the incident, he asked both the Dean of Students and the Director of Security to prepare reports. This, he felt, would ensure that his umbrella report would be as objective as possible. The report is submitted to CCSL for its comments. Ms Deri informed Council that CSU had also prepared a report on the incident which will be distributed to Council at the meeting. It was noted that this report has been approved by CSU Council. A lengthy discussion ensued. Council felt strongly that students must have the right to express their views. However it is important that the rights of all people are respected. Protests must be allowed to happen, but the University must provide a safe and secure environment for all the members of the community. The element of "surprise" was discussed. Council was in agreement that had the CSU or the Dean of Students Office been approached in advance to advise them that a protest would be held on campus, this incident may have been avoided. Mr. Logan was in agreement with the recommendations in the Vice Rector's report but he felt that some of the language used put the onus on the protesters to prevent the violence. He felt that the onus should be on the University as well as the University Security, as trained professionals, to diffuse a situation and not augment it. Mr. Hinton reminded Council that in any decisions regarding policy revisions, it was important to keep "people" as the important factor. Dr. Boisvert agreed, adding that in view of that fact, he had solicited feedback from his Directors in preparing his report to the Vice Rector. Speaking privileges were requested for Mr. Christopher Scott, a McGill student who had been part of the protest and Ms Stacey Miller, a Concordia student. Council had no objection. Mr. Scott spoke at length on the incident from his perspective. He felt strongly that the University Security's reaction was unprofessional, far too violent, antagonistic and created a climate of fear for Concordia students. He questioned the motivation of the University security in calling the police and the reactionary tactics of the police. Mr. Scott asked that the following points/questions be considered by CCSL:

- a) The University must investigate the "who, why and whens" of the request for the presence of the police on campus. This information should be made public.
- b) Request that the University drop all charges against protesters.
- c) Endorse the recommendations in the CSU report prepared by Ms Mularkie.
- d) Request a copy of the Hall Building Lobby Security Video.

Dr. Boisvert stated that this meeting is not a hearing in any sense and he cautioned members of Council to bear this in mind. Ms Miller felt strongly that the university policies are restrictive and there is a climate of harassment at the University. She felt that the support given to the Security Department by the Administration is sending a clear message to the students that the actions by Security are condoned. Dr. Boisvert reiterated that it is never the intention of the University to restrict the involvement or participation of students in issues or protests, but rather to affirm the principle of freedom of speech and action as part of the learning process. Mr.

Hinton felt that this was an isolated incident and that in the past university security had shown an openness and fairness to students and their issues. Both Mr. Hinton and Ms Ryan felt the incident could have been avoided had the protesters spoken to CSU or the Dean of Students Office beforehand. Ms Ryan felt it served no purpose to play the "blame game". Nonetheless, it was agreed that mistakes had been made and that the important issue was to ensure that a clear, public and fair policy be in place to protect the rights of all. Ms Miller felt that in order to promote and encourage free speech at Concordia, it is important that the actions of Security are deemed unacceptable. She made the following recommendations:

- a) Clarification of the policy with respect to protests, freedom of speech, etc
- b) A public apology to protesters and students
- c) A donation to be made to the Chilean Refugee Fund
- d) A donation to be made to APEC protesters in Vancouver

As well, Ms Miller asked what policies were in place for a student to lay a complaint against security. Dr. Boisvert said complaints could be brought directly to him. As well, the University has in place services such as the Ombuds Office and the Office of Rights and Responsibilities to deal with complaints in a confidential and effective manner.

With respect to some of the issues raised by Mr. Scott and Ms Miller, Mr. Emond confirmed that Security is required to call police at any time they feel the degree of confrontation is past a certain point. As there is no surveillance system inside the Lobby of the Hall Building, there is no video available. The University itself is not bringing charges against the protesters and it would not be the place of the University to dissuade an individual from laying charges. With respect to the monetary contributions, university money is public money allotted for excellence in education and research. The University cannot make donations from a diminishing balance. However students can make their own decisions with respect to the funds under their control.

Mr. Bujold felt it was important to learn from this incident, improve our policies and move ahead in a positive manner. It was not beneficial to dwell on the mistakes, but to make sure our revised policies will ensure an open and safe environment for all.

Dr. Boisvert reiterated the purpose of the report was provoke discussion as well as reflect on whether our policies are good enough to ensure fairness for all. He asked if Council was ready to deal with the report. After a brief discussion, it was decided that the CSU report would be deferred to the December CCSL meeting as Council had not had time to read the report. The following motion was made by Mr. Logan, seconded by Ms Kerby:

Be it resolved that CCSL endorse the recommendations made in the Vice Rector's Report and that the discussion of the CSU Report, by Ms Mularkie be deferred to the December 18th meeting of Council

The motion was carried

4.2 Task Force on Commercial Advertisement on Campus

As the two student members of the committee were unable to be at the meeting and because of time restraints, it was decided to defer this issue to the December 18th meeting.

5. REPORTS:

Dr. Boisvert reminded Council that the Director's written reports, giving information on the various services and events offered by their respective departments, were distributed for Council's information. These reports are the first of the two reports as required by CCSL. The second report is due for the March 1999 CCSL meeting.

5.1 University Libraries The members of CCSL met in the Vanier Library Orientation Room where Mr. Curran gave a brief overview of the Library and its services. He reiterated, as we move more and more into the electronic age, how important it was for students to know how to use and correctly identify information available on the net. Mr. Curran introduced Ms Diane Sauvé. Council was then treated to an "interactive" experience on the computers as we learned how to do a "quick search on Proquest." The plans are to open a similar orientation room at the Webster in the new year. Dr. Boisvert thanked Mr. Curran and Ms Sauvé for a most informative and enjoyable presentation.

6. Student Life Issues

Ms Hedrich spoke briefly about *Homecoming 99* which will be held September 30, Oct 1&2. The festivities will be held in conjunction with the University's 25th Anniversary Celebrations. Your input and involvement is greatly desired. Please consider getting involved!

7. REPORT FROM THE CHAIR OF THE RECREATION & ATHLETICS BOARD

Ms Kerby said as Mr. Zarins has been inordinately busy with playoffs and was not available at this meeting and due to time constraints, was Council in agreement to defer this item to the December meeting of CCSL. Council had no objection.

8. NEW BUSINESS

There was no new business.

9. NEXT MEETING

The next meeting will be Friday, December 18, 1998 at 10AM H 769

10. TERMINATION OF MEETING

A motion to terminate the meeting was made by Ms Ghadban, seconded by Dr. Graub.

The motion was passed